

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the present application as evidenced by the non-final Official Action of July 20, 2005 (hereinafter "Office Action"). In response, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 12 and 13 to clarify that the security offload component is in the operating system kernel. Applicants have also added new claims 14 - 20, which include system and computer program claim analogs of various method claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references fail to disclose or suggest, among other things, all of the recitations of independent Claims 1, 12, and 13, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested for at least the reasons discussed hereafter.

Independent Claims 1, 12, and 13 Are Patentable

Independent Claims 1, 12, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,175,917 to Arrow et al. (hereinafter "Arrow"). (Office Action, page 2). Independent Claims 1, 12, and 13 are directed to a method, a system, and a computer program product for improving security processing in a computing network in which a security offload component is used. These three claims have been amended to clarify that the security offload component is in the operating system kernel. For example, independent Claim 1, as amended, recites:

providing a security offload component in an operating system kernel
which performs security processing;
 providing control functions in the operating system kernel for directing
 operation of the security offload component;
 providing an application program;
 executing the application program; and
 executing the provided control functions during execution of the
 application program, thereby selectively directing the security offload component
 to secure at least one communication of the executing application program.
(Emphasis added.)

Claims 12 and 13 include similar recitations. Support for providing the security offload component as part of the operating system kernel is provided, for example, at page 11, lines 13 -

19 of the Specification. The Office Action cites portions of Arrow related to a VPN unit authenticating itself to a VPN management station as disclosing the security offload component recited in independent Claim 1. (Office Action, page 2, citing col. 9, lines 18 - 25 of Arrow). Applicants respectfully submit, however, that Arrow does not disclose or suggest providing a security offload component as part of the operating system kernel. Arrow describes the operating system 116 with respect to FIG. 7 where security processing is shown as being performed by the encryption/decryption unit 730. In sharp contrast to the recitations of independent Claims 1, 12, and 13, however, the encryption/decryption unit 730 of Arrow is not part of the operating system 116 kernel, which appears to be the VPN processor 718 as it is described as controlling "the operation of the operating system 116." (Arrow, col. 10, lines 56 - 58). Moreover, Arrow explains that, in some embodiments, the encryption/decryption unit 730 is implemented as an application specific integrated circuit (ASIC). (Arrow, col. 11, lines 43 - 47). Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that Arrow appears to contain no disclosure or suggestion of incorporating the encryption/decryption unit 730 in the VPN processor 718, which appears to serve as the operating system 116 kernel.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 12, and 13 are patentable over Arrow, and that Claims 2 - 11 and 14 - 20 are patentable at least as they depend from an allowable claim.

Various Dependent Claims are Separately Patentable

As discussed above, dependent Claims 8 - 11 are patentable at least as they depend from patentable independent Claim 1. Applicants further submit, however, that these dependent claims are separately patentable for at least the reasons discussed hereafter.

Dependent Claims 8 - 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Arrow. Each of dependent Claims 8 - 10 provides additional details with respect to what is provided to the security offload component for use in securing communications. Dependent Claim 11 and new Claim 17 provide additional detail with respect to how outbound data is sent from the security offload component. Arrow's description of the encryption-decryption unit 730 appears to be limited to the passage at col. 11, lines 43 - 47, which does not include any details with respect to what the encryption-decryption unit 730 uses to provide secure communications

or how data is sent from the encryption-decryption unit 730. Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 8 - 11 and 17 are separately patentable over Arrow.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. Alternatively, Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendment as introducing no new issues and narrowing the issues for further consideration. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,



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